

OLD DR. IBSEN REAPPEARS

"THE LADY FROM THE SEA" IS SEEN AT THE LYRIC.

An Ibsen Play That Was Never Given Here Before in English—Some of the Characteristic Points in the Drama—Chicago's New Theatre Actors Here.

It was fine open weather along Theatre Alley last night and there were some enthusiastic actors on hand to produce the Lyric Theatre one of the best dramas of a modern playwright. The Drama Players, responsible for this temporary return from the limbo of had plays are not, of course, organized with the same purpose that animates most theatrical companies. Their motto is not "We strive to please." It might seem obvious from the proceedings of the Drama Players last night that they strive to bore. Yet that is not altogether true. The company was formed to imitate in modest fashion the experiment of the New Theatre in New York. So their purpose is in reality to elevate.

Elevation is a noble process on all occasions. The audience seemed last night to take it hard, however, and more than one spectator wondered why elevation always has to begin with an application of Ibsen. If it is in the theory that any subsequent attempt will be less painful, there is something in the theory. It is on the other hand the insistence of the appearance of the Norwegian playwright is intended to imply superiority, such hopes are vain. It is one credit to the New Theatre that its programme contained but one small dose of the wise and doctor's philosophy in dramatic form.

"The Lady from the Sea" was never acted here before in the vernacular, although it seems improbable that the drama could have escaped our active German theatres. That it has been brought forward at this time is an evidence of the sporadic survival of the Ibsen myth. There are actors of plays just as poor which no manager or association would ever think of dragging from their dusty graves. If any of our mortal managers produced "The Lady from the Sea" his family and friends would summon the insanity experts or send him away for observation.

As a specimen of dramatic aberration that once interested a large number of readers, the theatregoers were never interested in Ibsen in this country of plays it might be thought worth while to place this five act riddle before the public. All the hoot owls that in all tongues sat in solemn judgment on the Ibsen theatre were never able to dig much of a message out of his play. Most of the contemporaneous comment on the work generally referred to the author's life at the time it was written, or to his youth or his health or something that was not perceptible in the drama, as if a work for the stage did not have to stand or fall by the impression which it makes in action entirely in dependent of any external influences.

Last night Hedwig Reicher played *Ellida*, the daughter of a lighthouse keeper who loved the sea and then a sailor and kept on longing for both after she had married a physician. But the minute he set her free to follow her sailor if she wanted to this neurotic wife, with the innate cussedness of the Ibsen heroine, elects to remain with the tireless doctor who had made her his second wife. Donald Robertson, the artistic head of the Drama Players, was seen as Wangel, her husband, the part of the *Stranger*, who is the sailor lover of *Ellida*, was in the hands of Sheldon Lewis. The other parts in the play are unimportant and impress the audience only by their dullness. Some of them are more or less lengthy so far as their mere verbal average goes, but the trio named alone possessed any interest for last night's audience.

To the unlighted spectator who does not possess the piercing eye of the perfect Ibsenite, which sees in dullness the deepest wisdom, in childlike simplicity the most eloquent interpretation of the poetry of the soul, and in the notorious and well recognized facts of life discovers only novel principles, to such an unfortunately Philistine section of the audience at the Lyric Theatre last night there seemed but one interesting element in "The Lady from the Sea." There is undeniably a certain poetic beauty in the thought of the young girl born and bred within the sound of the waves and then giving her heart to a sailor who had run away before they could marry in the usual way because he had murdered his captain. Forever singing in her ears the harmony of the sound of the sea and the words of his promise that he would some day come back to take her away whatever might happen, when on their wedding which was only the binding of two rings with a third and throwing them into the sea.

So the audience sees *Ellida* in the first act longing for the sea and fearing the return of her lover, who she is led to believe may be dead. There is even a suspicion of drama in the incident of the birthday celebration which her stepdaughter had arranged for their mother, but not for *Ellida* and the world believes. After the first act there remains only Ibsen to the 10th power. The wife grows more and more neurotic, talks with truth that is the least idea what is the matter with her, although she certainly must be sicker than she seems. All the lyric touch in the love of the girl for her sailor and the coast on which she sees her sailor—all this element that might charm or allure was promptly pounded out of the drama by the usual Ibsen formula.

To be sure there was only one other sick person in the play, but he was a man with tuberculosis, which is notoriously a very unhealthy kind of illness. The sly, insinuating, irresistible Ibsen humor was provided by a painter of scenery in the act of being painted by a painter who had been painting scenery for the theatre. The painter of scenery was the village barber, dancing master and guide. He described himself thus, but did nothing before the audience to add any point to these characteristics. There were two stepdaughters of *Ellida*, who did not seem to care especially for her and did much talking about their aims, then about going out into the world and following other courses which showed that a girl has turned her thoughts toward her own life. The whole view-point is so suburban that, however effective such a thing might have been as a drama, nobody could accept these little villagers, with their narrow ideas, their ignorance of life and their self-satisfied assumption that they really are alive and play any role in the world. Even in their own restricted existence they are hopelessly uninteresting to any public. Future students of the theatre will probably find nothing in its history so baffling as the case of Ibsen. Their complexities may not be diminished, moreover, by our present knowledge that the Ibsen movement did not rest on his acted plays but

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on those that were read by a part of the public that was generally unacquainted with the stage and was therefore quite unable to realize how poor a dramatic product the majority of them are.

Last night's example of the Ibsen incident might have been made less of an ordeal by some attempt at a realization of the poetic phases of "The Lady from the Sea." But from such a standard the investigation of the drama was quite pitiful. To the actors in this black walnut specimen of the Norwegian dramatist's theatre there should be extended only the deepest sympathy. They must make whatever bricks they can, with no straw whatever. Donald Robertson is an eloquentist but not an actor. He reads well, but the gift of impersonation seems to be wholly beyond any powers he revealed last night. Hedwig Reicher as the lady who came from the sea showed little sense of climax. She shuddered just as much at the first line of the recital about her sailor husband as she did at the last. But she was appropriately solemn and incoherent and uncomfortable. That is about the most an actress needs to play *Ellida*. It has been said that amateurs at best of all others certain dramas of Ibsen. Even they would be wasted on such a work as "The Lady from the Sea." The perfect Ibsenite, who is not a realist, last night must have, fervently prayed that the dust would be allowed to settle over it again.

ALL ON GABY'S ACCOUNT.

Man Who Was to Give a Birthday Supper for Her Friend Himself Arrested.

Ayes De Vellers of 148 West Forty-eighth street, president of the Aerial Equipment company of 1743 Broadway, was arrested in the Yorkville police court yesterday on the complaint of Rudolph Schwarz, a caterer and proprietor of Victoria Hall at 811 Lexington avenue, who declared that he was out \$125 because of the defendant.

Schwarz said that the money was expended in preparing a birthday supper to be given in honor of Gaby Deslys, the French actress. But this particular supper was not eaten by the actress and her friends.

"We had the food and the champagne and the souvenir cards with Gaby's picture on them all prepared when the affair fell through," said Attorney Adler to Magistrate McGuire. "It was a dead loss to us as we couldn't use the food."

Schwarz said that on October 31 De Vellers came to him and ordered a supper for eighty persons to be given on November 1 after the evening performance of Mlle. Deslys. The supper was to cost \$125 and he had the menu cards bearing the picture of Gaby. There was also to be a birthday cake for the actress, corsage bouquets for the women and carnations for the men.

The giver of the supper told Mr. Schwarz he had known the actress in France. The caterer requested a deposit and De Vellers gave him \$500 on the Pennsylvania National Bank of Philadelphia. The caterer said he deposited the check in his bank and began to prepare for the party. The next day he learned that the Philadelphia bank would not honor the check.

He consulted with De Vellers, who offered him another check, which he refused. Schwarz called the supper off, but De Vellers got another caterer. The case came into court on a summons and after listening to the statement of the complainant the court ordered a formal complaint made out and issued a warrant. Attorney Adler asked an adjournment until tomorrow to get an officer of the Philadelphia bank as a witness. The request was granted and De Vellers was held in \$1,000 bail.

NEWS OF PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

Dustin and William Farnum Are Soon to Appear in New Shows.

A. H. Woods will present Dustin and William Farnum in a new American play, "The Little Rebel," at the Liberty Theatre on Tuesday evening, November 14. "The Little Rebel" is a war play, with Dustin Farnum appearing as a Federal Colonel and William Farnum as a Confederate Captain. Edward Pele is the author.

Charles Dillingham has arranged that Thomas A. Wise and John Barrymore, who are now playing at the Liberty Theatre in "The Sign of the Cross," shall move to the Gaety Theatre after this week. The management of the Winter Garden announces that José Collins has been engaged for the part of *Olga* in "Vera Violeta," in which Gaby Deslys and Stella Mayhew also appear. Miss Collins is a daughter of Lottie Collins, who was the first to sing "Ta Ra Boom De Aye."

Funeral of Kyrie Bellow.

At the dead actor's request the funeral services for the late Kyrie Bellow, which took place yesterday morning in the Roman Catholic Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Seventy-first street and Broadway, were private. However, a large crowd, including a number of well known actors and actresses, attended the services. The Rev. Matthew A. Taylor, rector of the church, officiated at the Requiem low mass that was celebrated at 10 o'clock. Father Taylor was assisted by the Rev. Father Gilman, the Rev. Father Baxter and the Rev. Father Chambers, D. D.

The Seagulls.

Sailing to-day by the North German Lloyd liner Kronprinz Wilhelm, for Plymouth, Cherbourg and Bremen, Dr. and Mrs. Charles W. Elliot, the Countess M. Max de Foras, Dr. and Mrs. M. F. Kirkbride, William H. Wild, Edwin H. Unger and Charles G. Edmunds.

Passengers by the Holland-American steamship *Nieuw Amsterdam*, for Boulogne and Rotterdam, Dr. and Mrs. F. E. Abbott, Mrs. H. K. Appleton, Mrs. John G. Avery, Mrs. M. F. Field, Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Gifford and Mrs. George E. Wood.

Gifford and Company's sales of Fresh Beef in New York City for the week ending Saturday, Nov. 4, averaged 8.30 cents per pound.—A.D.



Wireless Telegraphy

SINCE the appearance of the first edition of The Century Dictionary, Cyclopedia and Atlas, wireless telegraphy has appeared and has become so efficient that it has been used in several instances to prevent disasters at sea, notably in the rescue of the steamship Republic.

The illustrations shown are especially modern and complete, including views of the most famous wireless stations and wireless apparatus and also of operating-rooms both on steamships and on shore. The definitions give the reader a good working knowledge of wireless telegraphy.



Medical Discoveries

THE Century records the progress in the discovery of serums for the prevention and cure of disease, such as cancer, consumption and other malignant diseases. This is only one instance of the progress of both medicine and biology; in both, the latest discoveries are described and all the terms used are fully defined in this up-to-date edition of The Century.

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New words, such as "aeronaut" and "hangar," have been added to the language. All these new words are defined, and authoritative pictures are given of the various types of aeroplanes, biplanes, monoplanes, and other flying machines and dirigibles. The Professor of Meteorology at Harvard, and two practical aeronauts, had charge of this part of the work.



The Art of War

DESPITE the Hague Conference, and the progress of the world's peace, war is now raging at two places upon the map of the globe. The art of war, and the engines by which it is applied, have both advanced materially in twenty years. This advance is shown, early by Joseph and Gustav, by hundreds of new definitions, and the enlargement of old ones; by pictures of battleships, guns and other implements of war. The Atlas contains the latest maps of the world, and, in its pages, campaigns may be followed with accuracy.

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